

**Ordinance Committee
November 6, 2013
PROPOSED FEE SCHEDULE**

BACKGROUND

In July of this year staff proposed an addition to the fee schedule regarding commitments which had only recently been established after the state legislature amended the enabling legislation on the matter in 2011. The legislature's action precipitated in the Area Plan Commission taking action to set boundaries for commitments, tailoring the enabling legislation to meet our community's needs. During the Ordinance Committee's discussion of the matter of establishing a fee for the commitment process, committee members raised the issue of evaluating the entire fee schedule against other communities' fee schedules before taking action on commitment fees. Committee members' reasoning was that the fee schedule was likely out of date (given many of the fees not having been adjusted for over ten years) and likely not remotely commensurate with the staff costs associated with processing the various services the Area Plan Commission and Area Board of Zoning Appeals provides. Accordingly, the Ordinance Committee directed staff to conduct a review of the fee schedule and propose recommendations for fee changes.

THE PROCESS

APC staff conducted a review of twenty-one regional local governments (14 in Indiana) and compared fee schedules. Only one fee schedule (belonging to the APC of Vigo County, Indiana) charged less than our current fee schedule in every category. The vast majority of schedules charged significantly more in all major categories. Staff's first draft of recommendations was presented at the August 7, 2013 Ordinance Committee public hearing and was based primarily on the fee schedules of some of our "peer communities" in the state including the APC of St. Joseph County (South Bend), the APC of Evansville-Vanderburgh County, the Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Planning Commission, Monroe County and the City of Bloomington.

In two additional hearings (September and October) staff presented staff-time versus fees collected cost comparisons for the year 2012, demonstrating that the current fee schedule falls woefully short of recapturing even a small percentage of the taxpayer money spent on staff/board/commission time in processing various petitions. The proposed fee schedule continued to be modified during this time to reflect the committee's discussion points as well as public input.

THE 11/6/13 PROPOSED FEE SCHEDULE

After receiving additional comments from both committee members and the public staff has developed a final draft of proposed fee changes. The result of our efforts is a more balanced fee schedule that is not only more on par with our peer communities but also better recaptures staff costs in reviewing and processing the various petitions and applications that comprise a significant amount of staff's time.